

# BIG SUNFLOWER RIVER MAINTENANCE PROJECT

## June rains further emphasize the need for maintenance

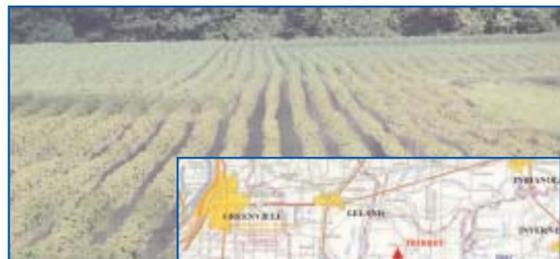
Heavy rains throughout the month of June further emphasized the need to complete the Big Sunflower River Maintenance Project. In 1989, the Darlove, MS area was experiencing flooding during relatively normal rainfall events. The Mississippi Levee Board started collecting rainfall and gauge data and submitted this information to the Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers for their review. The Corps found that the lower portion of the Big Sunflower River & Tributaries Project (BSR&T) was beginning to fill in with 3-5' of sediment. Thus, the Big Sunflower River Maintenance Project was designed. This maintenance project will restore the channel capacity of the Big Sunflower River system to the original capacity it had after the original BSR&T Project was completed in the mid-1960's.

Following the Mississippi State Supreme Court ruling in 2001 that removed the water quality certificate from the project, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is currently reviewing the record while at the same time the Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers is working on a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The Draft SEIS is scheduled to be released later this year.

During the past several years, the flooding problems have worsened upstream of Darlove. The Tralake, Bourbon, and Tribbett areas are now starting to flood during relatively nor-

mal rainfall events. This proves that if flood control projects are not maintained, the problems do not remain in one location, they proceed upstream.

During the June rainfall event, 7,591 acres of farmland in the Darlove area were flooded. If the maintenance project had been in place, only 2,108 acres would have been flooded. It therefore seems essential that we move forward and this much needed maintenance project gets completed. If this project is stopped, conditions will continue to deteriorate upstream, as well as worsen downstream. The Mississippi Levee Board is hopeful that work can resume on this maintenance project in 2005. -MSLB



Flooding problems moving upstream



Water standing in fields



## Back in Time MS LEVEE BOARD

Left to Right: C.S. Tindall, Jr., Attorney; E.D. Rayner (Bolivar); E.M. Barry (Bolivar); Bill Andrews, Assistant Engineer; W.C. Beanland, Chief Engineer; Vivian Broom, Treasurer; L.T. Wade, President (Issaquena); Mr. McClure, MS Valley Association; Julius Thompson (Washington); Harold T. Council (Washington); Mrs. W.H. Birdsong, Secretary.



IMPACT NEWSLETTER - 5

# LEVEE BUILDING USING TOWER MACHINES



Prior to the 1927 Flood, the Mississippi Levee Board was responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the Mainline Mississippi River Levee. All the costs associated with these activities were funded by local taxes within the Mississippi Levee District. Following the 1927 Flood, Congress realized that flooding from the Mississippi River was caused by water that comes from 41% of the continental United States - parts or all of 31 States and 2 provinces of Canada. Congress passed the Flood Control Act of 1928 which established the Mississippi River & Tributaries Project (MR&T). This act basically put the financial burden on the Federal Government and the design responsibility on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

There was a massive effort starting in 1928 to raise all the Mainline Mississippi River Levees in the Lower Mississippi River Valley by the Corps of Engineers. In order to perform this giant task, tower machines were used. The tower excavator sat on top of the levee and a tail tower sat on the riverside of the borrow pit. Cables connected the two machines and borrow material was pulled up to the top of the levee for levee embankment. This operation was state-of-the-art for its day and helped raise a majority of the levee in a time of great need. -MSLB



View from tower excavator looking across borrow area at tail tower



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## Levee Board Commissioners Re-elected



Ginger Morlino, Secretary of the Levee Board, administers the Oath of Office to James W. House, Jr. (Bolivar), Roy Nichols (Issaquena) and Fred A. Ballard, Jr. (Washington), re-elected Commissioners for the Mississippi Levee Board

Fred Ballard, Jimmy House and Roy Nichols were all re-elected as Levee Board Commissioners.

Fred Ballard, President of the Board, a commissioner for

Washington County since 1988, is thrilled to be re-elected. "It has been an honor to serve the Mississippi Levee District and I will continue to work hard for flood control in the Mississippi Delta," Ballard said.

Jimmy House, commissioner from Bolivar County stated "Flood control is key to our economy. You can't live in the Delta without a system of levees, and these must be constantly maintained." House is currently in his third term as commissioner.

Roy Nichols was also re-elected to his post as commissioner from Issaquena County. "Most people in the Delta take the levee system for granted. I live a quarter mile from the levee so I look at it every day and know how important it is to the livelihood of everyone who lives and works in the Delta," Nichols said. He continued, "As long as the Levee Board is run like a business, we will be able to take care of the levees and continually improve them. People are not well informed about the levees, but we can't slack off, the maintenance must be performed or none of us would be able to work and live in the Delta." -MSLB

## Robert M. Thompson hired as Assistant Engineer

Robert M. Thompson, P.E., was recently hired by the Levee Board to fill the vacant position of Assistant Engineer. Thompson received a B.S. in economics from Millsaps College and later a B.S. in civil engineering from Ole Miss. Thompson worked in Greenville as a cotton merchant for eight years and later as a consulting engineer with W.L. Burle Engineers, also in Greenville.

Thompson is married to Greenville native Jenny Virden and they have one child, three year old Ann Hunter. "I'm excited about this opportunity to be able to serve all these great people in the Delta," Thompson said. "It is my good fortune to be in a position to work with Peter and this Board," Thompson added.

Fred Ballard, Board President, said, "The

Mississippi Levee Board realized with all our ongoing projects, we needed to continue to have an assistant engineer to help get the work done. Bobby is an outstanding Mississippi Delta native who will help the Mississippi Levee District for years to come."

Peter Nimrod, Chief Engineer, said "Bobby will be a great asset to the Mississippi Levee Board. His personality and knowledge is a perfect fit. We look forward to a long and productive working relationship." -MSLB



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# Corps Corner



**US Army Corps of Engineers**

## Colonel Vesay named Vicksburg District Engineer



Colonel Anthony C. Vesay is a distinguished military graduate of Penn State University and holds master's degrees in civil engineering from PSU and Systems Management from the University of Southern California. His military schooling includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the United States Army Command and General Staff College, the Armed Forces Staff College, and the National War College. He is a registered professional engineer in Virginia.

Other assignments include Project Engineer, Norfolk Corps of Engineers; aides-de-camp to Deputy Chief of Engineers; Operations Officer, 249th Engineer Battalion; and Joint Engineer Trainer, U.S. Atlantic Command. He also served in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope.

Other key command and staff positions include Company Commander, 14th Engineer Battalion; Commander, 249th Engineer Battalion; and Staff Officer, Programs Analysis and Evaluation Directorate, Pentagon.

His military awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, The Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation and Achievement Medals, Airborne and Air Assault badges, and Ranger tab.

He and his wife have four children. -MSLB



Board President Fred Ballard presents a framed receipt and shovel that was used during the 1927 flood to Col. Rick Clapp at his farewell dinner held June 29, 2004.



Jim Wanamaker and President Fred Ballard wish outgoing President of the Mississippi River Commission, Gen. Don T. Riley, good luck at his next position as Chief of Civil Works at the Corps of Engineers headquarters in Washington, D.C. Gen. Robert Crear will return to Vicksburg as the new President of the Mississippi River Commission.

## SLIDE REPAIR WORK BEGINS

The Vicksburg District has begun working on slide repairs in the Mississippi Levee District. Eight (8) slides will be fixed by mixing lime with the material to change the property of the soil and repacked into the levee structure. Four (4) slides will be fixed by removing the material and repacking the soil into the levee structure. -MSLB



Slide repair activities



Bulldozers and scrapers remove slide soil material

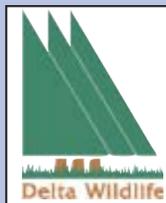


Mixing lime with soil material



Aerial view of material removed and mixed with lime

# MOURNING DOVE BANDING PROJECT



By Dave Godwin

For the first time in over 20 years, bird hunters throughout the Magnolia State might have noticed some unusual "jewelry" on mourning doves harvested during the 2003-04 hunting season. The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) is cooperating with 25 other state wildlife agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a regional mourning dove banding study. While the MDWFP and Mississippi State University con-



Mourning doves across the Magnolia State have been fitted with special bands as part of an ongoing research project.

ducted some localized banding in north Mississippi during the summer of 2002, this new project marked the first time mourning doves had been banded statewide since the late 1970s!

Mourning doves are an important game bird in Mississippi and many other states. Nationally, more doves are harvested annually than all other migratory game birds combined! In recent years, state and federal wildlife agencies have agreed that we need better data on several aspects of mourning dove ecology, to be able to best manage this important species. Researchers hope that this large-scale study will allow wildlife managers to estimate mourning dove survival and harvest rates. The study should also provide valuable information on the geographical distribution of dove harvest.

Dove trapping and banding was conducted in each region of Mississippi during July and August of 2003. MDWFP personnel from each district logged many hours trapping and banding birds across the state. Over 1,400 mourning doves were banded during 2003 in the Magnolia State alone! The MDWFP intends to continue banding efforts in all regions of the state during the summer of 2004, and the agency needs the cooperation of all dove hunters for this study to be successful. If you harvest a banded mourning dove this fall, please report this harvest to the National Bird Banding Lab at the telephone number stamped on the band. Hunters reporting banded dove harvests will be

Project "volunteer" Brannon Godwin prepared to release a banded mourning dove.



MDWFP Wildlife Biologist Dave Godwin bands a mourning dove in Oktibbeha County.

asked a few simple questions, and will be mailed feedback from the lab as to where and when the dove was banded.

Please do your part to help with this important research project as you hunt this year. Your assistance will allow the MDWFP and other wildlife managers to gain valuable information on this special game bird. If you have additional questions about this study, please contact Dave Godwin, MDWFP Small Game Coordinator, at 662-325-5119.

## JULY BOARD MEETING RECAP

The Board of Mississippi Levee Commissioners held their regular board meeting on July 12, 2004. Following the swearing in of the re-elected Commissioners, Fred A. Ballard, Jr., James W. House, Jr., and Roy Nichols, the Board took the following action: re-elected Fred Ballard as President and Kenny Rogers as Vice-President of the Board; adopted the 2004-2005 Budget; set tax rate at 2.19 mils, the same rate assessed for the last 8 years; accepted proposals for depositories of Levee Board funds for the next 2 years; authorized the advertisement for bids for helicopter herbicide application and 2 SUV's; and received status reports on all the ongoing projects in the Mississippi Levee District. -MSLB

## LEVEE & BERMS PROJECT UPDATE

Item 502L - 7.6 miles - 100%	Item 488L - 8.8 miles - 10%
Item 496L - 10.5 miles - 96%	Item 477L - 5.1 miles - 69%



Item 477L - hauling borrow material



Item 477L - placing gravel on completed portion of levee



Item 488L - construction activities



Item 488L - building retaining dikes



Item 496L - dump trucks



Item 496L - removing old gravel - getting ready to top out levee



Item 496L - borrow area



Item 496L - topping out levee at Mayersville

## Staff Profile:

### Charles S. Tindall, III Board Attorney



Since 1982, the Mississippi Levee Board has received expert legal advice from one of the Delta's most respected legal minds, Charles "Charlie" Tindall, III. "I have enjoyed my involvement with the Levee Board. Over the years I have found them to be extremely dedicated public servants," stated Tindall. Tindall graduated from Vanderbilt and received a law degree from Vanderbilt in 1968. That same year he joined the law firm Lake Tindall, LLP in Greenville. He

still is a partner with Lake Tindall. He has overseen such legal issues as the Big Sunflower River Maintenance Project and the Levee Enlargement & Berms Project. "I have been with the Levee Board for three Chief Engineers now," added Tindall. Charlie followed the steps of his father Charles "Chick" Tindall, Jr. who was the board attorney from 1948 to 1981. -MSLB

## Mississippi Levee Board Officers & Staff

**COMMISSIONERS:**  
**Fred A. Ballard, Jr.,** President, Washington County  
**Kenneth Rodgers,** Vice-President, Humphreys County  
**Johnny Robinson,** Washington County  
**James W. House, Jr.,** Bolivar County  
**Nott Wheeler, Jr.,** Bolivar County  
**Roy Nichols,** Issaquena County

**Laurence Carter,** Sharkey County  
**STAFF:**  
**Peter Nimrod,** Chief Engineer  
**Robert M. Thompson,** Assistant Engineer  
**Charles S. Tindall, III,** Attorney  
**Judy B. Ross,** Treasurer  
**Ginger Morlino,** Secretary  
**Patrick Bolls,** Maintenance Superintendent  
**Rick Boyd,** Engineering Technician